

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

1 Interferometric apparatus and methods for reducing the effects of coherent
2 artifacts in interferometers. Fringe contrast in interferograms is preserved while
3 coherent artifacts that would otherwise be present in the interferogram because of
4 coherent superposition of unwanted radiation generated in the interferometer are
5 suppressed. Use is made of illumination and interferogrammetric imaging
6 architectures that generate individual interferograms of the selected characteristics of
7 a test surface from the perspective of different off-axis locations of illumination in an
8 interferometer and then combine them to preserve fringe contrast while at the same
9 time arranging for artifacts to exist at different field locations so that their contribution
10 in the combined interferogram is diluted.